

LOVE POEMS

FOURTH SERIES

REGINALD C. ROBBINS





Class PS 3535

Book 015482

Copyright N^o 1912

COPYRIGHT DEPOSIT.



LOVE POEMS

FOURTH SERIES

REGINALD C. ROBBINS



CAMBRIDGE

Printed at The Riverside Press

1912

PS 3535
Q 15 L 82
1912

COPYRIGHT, 1912, BY REGINALD CHAUNCEY ROBBINS

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Q 15 L 82



CONTENTS

	Page
HIBERNALS	1
I-XIX	
PARENTALS	23
I-XXIV	
RELIGION IN NATURE	49
I-XI	
WORK AND DEATH	63
I-XII	
SONGS OF THE GENERATIONS	77
I-X	
POEMS OF A PRAGMATISM	89
I-XXV	
SONNETS DOMESTIC	117
I-XXXIII	

HIBERNALS

HIBERNALS

I

BELOVÈD ! how long ago a winter was
Of loneliest desolation : 'neath mine heart
An icy stiffening snow-sepulchred ;
And all above, about my branches bare
A frost-blanch'd irony, a sleeted blast
Of bitterest endurance ! Love, how long,
How longtime since ; though winters, ah, so few
Have intervened ! For now the snow without
Our windows swirleth round a fire-warm'd hearth
Of heart's best homeliness ; the comfort of it
Sustaining sap and splendor green throughout
Our mutual forestage — as meanwhile sung.

LOVE POEMS

II

FOR meanwhile many a song hath been to thee
In praises seasonable of thy spring,
Thy soul's-own summer and of autumn-time
With death-deep, loyal griefs but binding close
And closer yet the dear companionship.
And now, with fruits of harvest, him our child,
Betwixt us in our arms enfolded, we
Hearken the boreal sepulchring without
Of blithe, past raptures ; whilst, enraptured more
With inward bliss, bless we the intimacy
Of hibernation, earth's primordial
Privity of love's garner'd aftermath.

HIBERNALS

III

AND, soft-uncouth, an inarticulance
Of infant-mouth primeval now, anon,
Croons ripplingly in undersong, so tender
An antiphon (if intermittent still
And nowise imitative of the storm)
In spiritual symphony thereto.
That thou and I unto the firelight's smile
And sympathetic murmurings of flame
Yearn with the parent-thrill and presently
Feel stealing to our very core of soul
The wild, waste, outdoor mouthings. For we learn
Luxurious kinship with the dearth-lorn blast.

LOVE POEMS

IV.

WE learn and know the nature-element
Within us which unto the desolate world
Responds with sense of desolateness there
Enarm'd, enfolded and attuned to souls
Wholly at peace, at passionate peace, with all.
'T is true, this body of man must find its breath,
For peace' sake, not in nature-agony
Of contest elemental but, in warmth
And physic-comfort of the fire-gleam'd hearth :
Before such feel in fulness be achieved.
Alone 't is civilization yields our frame,
World-worn, the life-chance of the strongest soul.

HIBERNALS

V

A SELF-WON strength of spirit thus is in us,
Though ne'er so snugly our companionship
Allows the hiemation, listeneth
Awide to tempest-music whilst so close
The folk-song flutters on the trustful lips.
I need not shame, if that the happier heart
Of this our spirit-homeliness more seem
Winter-energetic than that heart of old
Exposed and harden'd, if so shrinkingly,
So bitterly to the insensate gale.
Now are both moods ennobled ; that, of dearth ;
And this exuberance : by strength through thee.—

LOVE POEMS

VI

AND in such mood exuberant we have pass'd
The hours of storm that morningward endured
From evening nightlong round our wonder-home.
The hours of storm have pass'd in utterance
Of something in me alien not to them :
A rapturous wintriness if still hearth-bound
In domesticity. But now abroad
Ourselves into the morning-world start we,
Anew that now the sun hath risen along
The southward hillside and the clouds are swept
Clean of the sky by yon new westerwind :
We, in our wintry strength and majesty.

HIBERNALS

VII

FROM ingleside and home-ties fare we forth,
Leaving for focus of remembrance there
The child, love's garner'd fruitage ; starting forth
For rapture-fed communion with our world
Of sheeted snow. For we have come, we two,
Through autumn-griefs and autumn-harvestings
Alike, to feel of the soul, as love allows,
World-power: the vigorous splendor of the time
(Which is not summer, savoreth scarce of spring)
Which clotheth not with leaves the forest-lift
Of life, but archeth, interarcheth high
Over the snow a structure vaulted strong.

LOVE POEMS

VIII

FOR, in cathedral of the frosted god,
Of earth as earth is hard and grandly free,
Uprear in groin'd, well-architected thrust
Of noble openness and dignities
The shafts of soul's organic forest, charged
With mundane-orb'd endurance, with a worth
Of heaven-wide inference ; beneath the sun
His crystalline illumining, a faith
Provided, scarce of inflorescence, yet
Of fecund space-significance, a truth
Magnificent in intimacy with
The blue endoming earth's mosaic aisles.

HIBERNALS

IX

NOT now the low-door'd home, the nest of peace,
But, valent and virtued by the peace within,
For us the aspiration as of upreach
And outlook cloudless of the frozen fane !
For us the liberal yearning, heart in heart
And hand to hand (with soul-core centred still
In the nested offspring) toward the sweep of life !
The light is on the hillside, o'er the fields
The shimmer of opalescence, crystalwise ;
And everywhere above the breeze-fleck'd floor
Of forest, the crisp twitter of nestless birds
At home as we about the heavenly hearth.

LOVE POEMS

X

FOR furry and feather'd hearts are all about us,
Of sun inspired and steely element
Ennobled to invite communion with them.
Though they be meek and wary (ay, perchance,
Of craft and fury to their weaker kind)
Yet are we, by the love-tie, capable —
In friendliness, in wonderment with them —
Of audience which, though o'er the crypts of life,
Yields hint of earth-sweet purpose and a song
Through tinkling galleries echoing of joy
Interpretative, ah, of utterance, though
Primeval, yet intelligible aye.

HIBERNALS

XI

INTELLIGIBLE — as the infant-croon
Archaic, eozoan, yet hath found
Its way of nature to the parent-heart,
Ear-opening the soul of parenthood
Even to the hearing of an humanism
In wintriness, discordant though 't would seem.
These thin path-traceries in the powdery snow,
This piping inarticulance above us,
Bear meaning to the spirit learnèd now
In lore earth-consanguineous. Love's speech
Hath taken a winter-trick, a lilt of song
Year-natured, from yon blessèd cottage-walls.

LOVE POEMS

XII

WITHOUT those cottage-walls must lie indeed
The mission in the opportunity
To plead by music to the music-ear
Of the love-uncultured folk, the furry things
And feather'd of the vaults of frostedness
And denizens of these cathedral aisles
Of the frozen godhood : unto them to plead
The inward-won fulfilment. And to them,
Through them and in their sphery affluence
Of freedom, freely sing I for the hope
They 'll not refuse to hearken who have taught me
By infancy an elemental faith.

HIBERNALS

XIII

AND, sith our song be elemental-borne,
Why sadden we, should the tameless twittering
Evade, in elvish and unfounded fear,
Our footsteps haply flounder'd in the trail ;
Or world, this outdoor, crisp and crystalline,
Sunflooded fluorescence, echo mainly
But love's misstep ; why sadden, when the faith
Of honest purport foils the failure in us,
Compelling confidence how crudest song,
If single-tongued of friendship kindest musing,
Deserves world-hearing, world-earn'd complaisance
In Orphean conclave of the birds and beasts ?

LOVE POEMS

XIV

AND fear not we a Marsyan-cruel doom
Of critical reprise should thus the skill
Announcing love-initiation lack us —
Skill requisite to make proselyte the cirque
Of uncouth audience. Some least grief of loss
Should be, though scarce of fear unto the soul
Of the flouted singer for the vanish'd wings,
The flirted feet of the airy, elvish crew ! —
No pride so sensitive is in me now
To tremble at misjudgment or to weep
When once again with thee our nest of peace
Wraps us around, world-instance still unwon.

HIBERNALS

XV

BELOVÈD, sans sense of such home-privacy,
Our low-door'd nest, with thee and garner'd meed
Of harvesting in frame of him our babe;
Sans absolute immanency to annul
The plausible failure of the missioning
In the winter-world beyond, love had not dared
The human heart-exposure; but as erst
Had fled the splendid savagery and hid
Deep, savage-like, in some rock-cavern'd lair
For sepulchring through season of the north —
That, when the south came sweet, mayhap, my soul
Were torpid-swoon'd that bravely should have breathed.

LOVE POEMS

XVI

BUT, bravely now, no cold torpidity
Shall numb the conscience with aborted pulse.
For anthems full unto the frosted god
Command the echoes, whether hark or no
The votaries of his temple. And, the hour
Of mission over, to the hearth of home
Thy feet and mine return, the drift-pack'd path
Retracing to the threshold — from within
At the half-oped door a greeting, infinite
In welcome to the sense, soul-primitive
Of crooning inarticulance : the child,
Love's first-fruits both and altar to the year.

HIBERNALS

XVII

BELOVÈD, how long ago the winter-world
(Sans sense of thee and of such home-coming
Potential from the paths laborious
Of onways yet unbroken) had to me
Seem'd onerous beyond the power of man.
How long ago, though winters, ah, so few
Have intervened, to sum themselves herein —
In this the winter of our harvestings,
This winter of our undertaking, so,
To reach the storm-world with the warmth of breath,
The wild world with love's all-civility :
This speech of home-fire flickering to the tongue !

LOVE POEMS

XVIII

AND can the confidence of intimate speech,
Of privacy poetic freeze within me,
Stopping the voice of comfort, if the blast,
Forsooth, scoff wilder and profane, perchance,
Heart's very altar-hearth to puff at it
With dismal-dread intrusion ? O, build anew
The blaze, allow e'en this the blare of storm
To buffet but with flame-flaps ! And more loud
Swell with afflatus of the hearth-of-storm
The music of the night-invaded door —
An need be ! But nowise shame we and cease
Love-utterance, though the soul itself be mock'd !

HIBERNALS

XIX

FOR faith and sacredness assuredly
Afford a self-assurance, guarantee
Song-value though soul's shaken sanctuary
Resound but hollowly to shocks of storm.
And, where the sanctuary's founding-stone
Base in earth's centre, no malignity
With cynic scout can sweep to nought in the night
Our sound of antheming. — The vanish'd wings !
Deplore we, both, that bourn of missioning ;
But not the baffled mission ! Love, for we
Sit close within the centre, still more sure
Allied, that love hath proved love's privity !

PARENTALS

PARENTALS

I

THE long-continued strain of thine unease
Had nigh unmann'd me ; and thy latter pain
Would overwhelm. A numbness, dread-compell'd,
Soddening all the spirit feels within
Of resonant, had fain devolved upon me :
Me mute when most some cheer but from the tongue,
Courageous though by lip-vitality,
Had been man's ministration. But the powers
Of thy distress had well wrought dumbness in me —
Sad-apprehensive of thy wearing days.
And when the worst was come and fate was on thee
With pangs of the birth, I stood not at thy side.

LOVE POEMS

II

I COULD but leave thee with the kiss of fear
To undergo alone thine agony ;
I then with heart of agony to hearken
Apart thine hour of frenzy. Till thy torture,
Wringing in me the very strings of the soul,
Hath from the panic stupor waked me wide
To vivid anguish and therewith a voice :
A voice of terrible pity and of prayer
For thee and for thine issue — but at last
A voice, man-like : potentiality
Of conquest over awful circumstance,
Of insight beyond fate unto the soul !

PARENTALS

III

FOR now I heed me that within thy heart
Was never fear nor wearingness nor pain ;
But outlook of the end, encouragement
Of love-vitality directed toward
The miracle of offspring ; nought of fate,
But all self-purpose unto genesis,
Autonomous adoption of the trial
For that the trial only may afford :
The event creative, the reality
Of individual life anew begun
Through interministration of thy life
And mine, thus universal overtly.

LOVE POEMS

IV

AND so ; through thine adoption of thy share
In power creative and its terror-stress
Of pain as 't were by protest cosmic for
The spirit-imposition in the clay ;
Because thou sayest, " Let there be life ", and life
Evolves upon the utterance (whate'er
Of penalty thou payest, sacrifice
By dint of the god-assumption, to the gods) ;
Must I as well, within my milder part
Of agony by sympathy, acknowledge
Only the victory of vital love
Above the dreadness of earth's cowering.

PARENTALS

V

TO vivid love and not to pain and fear
Be then the song : where fear and pain have waked
The spirit to vision but of life-begun —
Hymning in dreadness of the cowering clay
Mainly love's precondition. And, that now
The issue of the birth hath come in hope
(Not loss as formerly), shall thou and I,
Though creatures of death's cosmos, prove therein,
By burst of the cosmos unto soul afresh,
Union intern : for bond between the worlds,
World's babe, the god-embodiment of us
As we are flesh and spirit with all earth.

LOVE POEMS

VI

FOR that which springs of nature can but be,
Despite earth's pain and fear, yet earth's-own child,
Ensample natural (so proving earth
Her fear, yet truth-potential) of that heart
Of love which is our birthright; which alone
By soul-inception world-adoptively,
Self-comprehending instinct, positeth
Experience, precondition of the pain.
Wherefore the child, well-known to be of love
The formal fruit and of love formulate
Incipiently, may fairly span the worlds
Of earth and soul to constitute them one.

PARENTALS

VII

WHEREFORE as to some cosmic hearth of earth
Welcome the spirit-comer as to home ! —
Not from the vague, nor to the vague he cries
Demonstrative of function. Not one breath
But reconciles the birth-astonishment —
Within and by the power of common clay
Still to repeat in every instance new
The organic intra-inference : within
Each miracle-event, the reason-law
Of sentience-involution ; illustrating
In each pulse-beat afresh the evidence
Of earth-formation as by will of earth.

LOVE POEMS

VIII

BEHOLD, in every birth the immanence
Of truth-formation by earth-travailing !
First by thy days of wearing, thereupon
By this thine hour of frenzy ; and hereafter
(Please hope !) but by babe's-nurture ; by child's-
learning
(Through dint of every wonder-influence
Assertive on awe-infantile) of each
Wisdom of worldhood, rudimentary dread
Impress'd upon the dim interpreter
Self-urged to adaptation : that thereof
Be sentience stimulated, be built up
The architectural ordinance of mind.

PARENTALS

IX

SO, every way, the inter-inferences
Of pact-response, be they in love or fear,
Triumphantly demonstrate, each in kind,
A comprehension through the influencing
Instructive which, by process permanent,
Develops earth or soul alike in each
Uniquely universal evidence
Call'd individual, whose identity —
Be it of chemic-compound or of man —
Each in degree avows amalgamation
To systemization meaningful, some proof
Afforded of the person'd permeance.

LOVE POEMS

X

THE permeance that is I or thee alike
By virtue of our evidence distinct ;
The person that began as of the babe
In trial of this our fear and suffering —
Thy pain and mine who, being concern'd but most,
Must, through his never-ceasing sufferance
Of earth-sensation, build and cumulate
Earth-permeantly the personality
Of one who, sharing heritage of us
Alike, shall (unlike me or thee) beyond
Aught of our possible interpretance
Experience educative truth unique !

PARENTALS

XI

BUT unto us the opportunity,
If not of literal formulation, still
Of guidance, introduction on the sense
Of this expected personality
(And predicated genius prophesied
Of world-interpretance beyond our world) —
Unto us twain the duty, love, devolved
Of moulding unto exhibition first
Such aspects of experience as seem
Suggestive most — suggestive, ay, for thee
Or me, not as we haply hitherto
Have been but, as by parenthood become !

LOVE POEMS

XII

THROUGH sympathy progenitorial (lo !
Evolved, this hour of pain and earthly fear,
In this thy happy issue !) happiness
Shall guide, no doubt, the parent-instinct toward
An understanding of the dim-felt need,
Sure adumbration of the bourgeoning
At world-beginning. For such happiness
Is inly of an innocence akin
To world-beginnings ; and, imbued with breath
Of wonder at the contact, flowering
In long-unwonted childnesses of joy
Assisting sweetly love's rejuvenance.

PARENTALS

XIII

FOR, sooth, as in thy mother-face I see
The solemn exultation, after pain
The bless'd relief in high assurance of
The issue's fortune, feel I humbly here
A mother-power of faith indigenous
Well-worth as any dreamt-of hitherto
In love's philosophy ; a vision open'd
To regions of the world's old chronicle
Of thought's preadolescence : in my creed
Mistook for myth. The magic openeth
Of fairyhood back-reaching infinitely
Unto the dawn behind the noon in thee.

LOVE POEMS

XIV

THE dawn whereto yon orience belongs
Of fair ingenuosness were in thee still :
A *naïveté* acceptive, satisfied
In bland recipience as of vitalism
Fancied in all around — and sagely so !
The vex'd perplexity of cosmic years,
Soul-overweighting, wisely melts away
In mother-instinct of the youth of truth.
And in the wisdom heart-autochthonous
Thy wide-rewarded spirit sees, at peace,
The wonder-prospect of the leading-forth
By sympathy of infancy through earth.

PARENTALS

XV

IT were not, then, a harvesting of truths
Haply fore-ripen'd and wherefrom to pick
This fruit or other to the quickening
Of the taste in this our babe ; but germinance
Of child's-own earth, from earliest sense-seed
Implanted, gradual with every growth
Of the flower of sensibility upon him ;
And ours, as guided by thy morning-sight
Of all day's blare had blinded, to believe
Anew, through him and with his hourly need,
The truths of unsophistication, faith's
Sufficiencies heart-graded day by day :

LOVE POEMS

XVI

AND thus the guide-responsibility
But implicates affinity of sense
With him, the so-dependent on earth's power :
Of our part learn'd love's protogenesis
Almost unguess'd in my philosophy
Yet serving well the secret of a spirit
Whose proper kinship with the wilds and ways
Of simpler earth-things long-since slept forgot —
Since childhood in us snatch'd maturity
And left life's toys a-lying. And thus our age
Matures in youthfulness by fetching youth
Back to our bosoms in a little child.

PARENTALS

XVII

How well the little child shall lead us then
Back through the years whose sweetness quintessent
Wells up within me as I gaze, in thee,
On sweetness quintessent of motherhood
And, in the babe, on leadership at last
Provided to the mind's perplexity.
The pain and wearing of the days foregone,
The fear and suffering now, in sooth, are shown
The way of vision ever-orient,
Horizon-cirque of spirit, scarce by loss
Of life erst continental but, by breadth
Of outlook o'er primordial oceanhood.

LOVE POEMS

XVIII

THOUGH there the scenic figure fain betrays
The spiritual fault should we neglect
The eminence in us, above the child's,
Down-stooping, and ennobling this we see.
The fairyhood were fairer in our hearts
Than his, beloved ! For in us the feel
Of fresh-won innocence, through him achieved,
Assoilzies and enlightens, ah, how rich
And far a reach of world-soul intercourse,
How vast a sweep, beyond beginnings in him
Of all thy tender dawn-sight recreates !
No child must backward lead us from love-truth.

PARENTALS

XIX

LOVE-TRUTH we 've long-laboriously achieved —
Now none less cherishable than the child
His very innocence enricheth it!
Not for one instant must the guidance fail
Of this thy heart-sight fostering in him
(Firmler than inference acceptingly
Of earth's sense-kinship fairy-fanciful ;
Firmler than infancy !) prepotencies
Of sane sophistication best fulfill'd
Through heart-felt sympathies scarce **simulating**
Life as in lifeless-elemental, but
Stablishing spirit where is life in love.

LOVE POEMS

XX

AND, because love 's of beauty, life of song
(Insight, expressive comprehendingly),
This song unto his spirit stablishing
Wisdom of beauty where the infant-wail
Would fail of speech-suffusion ! If to him
Be sensitive acceptance, awesome trust —
Yet not to him the voice as unto us
Of meaning, of interpretation ! So
Be inarticulance mind-interfused
In speech of conscienced innocence ; be love
(Proved infancy of trust brought to self-sight
As truth) made vocal in integrity.

PARENTALS

XXI

FOR thus no more mere dread perplexity
At pain and earth's birth-problem, but a speech
Of all-adoption, in solemnity
Engender'd of the suffering and fear ;
Yet intimate of serious happiness
Responsibly content ; ingenuous
Desire and delight for parenthood
As by the babe reveal'd and satisfied !
I had not thought within thy pain to find
Such solace as this little child hath brought
Who, born of terrible sacrifice, hath furnish'd
Full resonance to rack'd strings of the soul.

LOVE POEMS

XXII

AND so unto the cradle may we bring
A childhood-fantasy, feeling with him
The fairyness of earth and speaking it
With delicate elaboration in
The touch of playful mystery, to lead
The babe in tenderness of heart; but aye,
For complement to childness, subtler sense
Of beauty to interpretance mature :
The fantasy, the beauty equally
Based in a sympathy perceptive of
Kinship of nature — at the acme now
In faith appreciative parentwise.

PARENTALS

XXIII

HOW wonderful without compare then, love,
That we, in adolescence held apart
And sharing nought of childhood-memory,
Should in this second childhood be at one !
How poor the price of pain and suffering
Which unto years of parenthood affords
The mutual infancy, the memories
Amalgamated and revived
Backreaching through the years of loneliness
To weld both lives, as 't were from birth, beyond
All possibility of severance
Unto one human whole within us both !

LOVE POEMS

XXIV

AN human whole be this, the spirit-birth
Of genesis within us severally ! —
What uplift in the outlook ! With what hymn
Of hope indemnified thy lips with mine
Join in life-celebration ! — And, with feel
Of primal intimacy, falls upon
These hearts alike the momentary hush
Of awed inception ere a realizing
In absolute fruition. Dear, but one vigil
Of mute acceptance (ah ! scarce dread-compell'd)
Ere burst, perchance, some perfect song of souls
Union'd and firmamental from the first !

RELIGION IN NATURE

RELIGION IN NATURE

I

WITH thee, belovèd, to the wilds and ways
Of the elder earth mine indolence hath come
For fair rejuvenation in the spirit
Of sunshine and the poesy of air
Open and unconfined, the breath of heaven :
With thee and through thee to attain by earth
A recrudescence and be hale and whole,
Breathed as the winds and tongued as woods and sea,
As hilltops sighted and the mountain-birds
That, swift o' the breeze and voiced as forest-boughs
Or shoreward surges, feel in heart the strength
Of ancient eminence enocean'd round.

LOVE POEMS

II

NOT as erstwhile alone and sorrowing,
In desperation delving (banish'd, ay,
From heart's urbanity) I'd vainly seek
The peace of comprehension in the primal
And ruder, earlier earth ; not as erstwhile
To mock with hindsight of an hope denied
The emptiness of ancients destroy'd —
And call the desolation thus divine ;
Nor as reverted to the dim, uncouth
And multitudinous incivilities :
Save so to find in these by sympathy
The soul-integrity thou bringest to them.

RELIGION IN NATURE

III

FOR now our interchanging courtesies
Of heart and hand as side by side we mount
The swart, rough rock-heap, these suffice to show
The youth perpetuant, child-hearth of home,
Enimaged in the wilderness : as wide
We gaze horizonward o'er many a league
Of flashing sea-sweep, surgent spruce and pine
In the high noon-scintillance. For these by thee
Increasingly as loftier yet we climb
Seem systemized, subsistently composed
To furtherance in beauty by the working
Of each least mutuality of all.

LOVE POEMS

IV

THERE are who take of earth and ocean-round,
Of mountain and of valley but the feel
Of grandeur and of wonder-worth at large ;
For them the scheme composed as though some mind
And eye beyond the workings of the world
Survey'd and plann'd and saw that it was good.
There are for whom beauty can be but this,
A preadornment to a master-scheme
Whereof the eye and mind as one apart
Contemplating, not bearing share in it,
Conceived and overlaid upon the truth
Of earth a worth not self-engender'd there.

RELIGION IN NATURE

V

HE seëth best (I yield) who loveth best :
And, so, our hearts by perspicacity
Of mutual furtherance may sense beyond
The eye and heart of any of these here,
Of beast or bird or tree-top or of man
Who knoweth not their splendor and his own ;
And in such sort the beauty is beyond them
And overlaid upon the plan of all. —
Yet not the eye nor mind may enter in,
Save as imagine with purport toward
The least of these that anywise hath heart
And purport in environment contain'd.

LOVE POEMS

VI

SO, wanting thee (myself a mind without
The secrecy of things), I might not take
The meaning as in beauty, but construed
An ordering as of fiat and a scheme
Conceived of desolation terrible
Despite the breadth of vision ; saw the stroke
That blasted ; and in resignation sought
Sublimity by dominance ordain'd
Over a shatter'd purpose and an hope
Shamed of rebellion as all earth aghast
Lay abject, cowering beneath the sword.
But found not comfort of the holier truth.

RELIGION IN NATURE

VII

YET now no wounded stem beside our path
Without life's inward splendor ; not one sound
Of windy eminence (the wash of the boughs
Or wail of wood-bird) but in wildness speaks
The world-old secret, shared this hour through thee
Within me ! For no purport superposed
Predominates to make of waves of the sea
Subserviences. But an ordering born
Of hand-to-hand and heart-in-heart proclaims
The comfort of domestic holiness
Achieved of wilderness its every heart
Envisaged and embosom'd of an own.

LOVE POEMS

VIII

FOR each intendeth all, as 't were through thee
Enlighten'd over and beyond the stress
Of privy struggling elementalwise.
For each intendeth each as though with joy
Confronting effort and engendering
In universal domicile his offspring
Of spirit-effluent — my truth with thine.
And where seem'd once but overmonadwise
A God (and mirrors merely of His might),
Now gleam the mundane multitudes, approved
Each godly and ensphering everywhere
A myriad monism as of thine in mine.

RELIGION IN NATURE

IX

THE youth of the world indeed is now within us,
As, overtly without, all things are young !
The ways of the world throughout rejuvenant,
Intend but holier hearthstone and the home
Now calling from below over the sea !
For at the hearthstone waits a nobler youth
(As never in the years of loneliness),
Youth human, thine and mine for living o'er —
The childhood of us waiting our return
And calling as in health of wilderness !
Descend we, love, in unioning renew'd
Of the earlier birth ; wise in our nature-strength.

LOVE POEMS

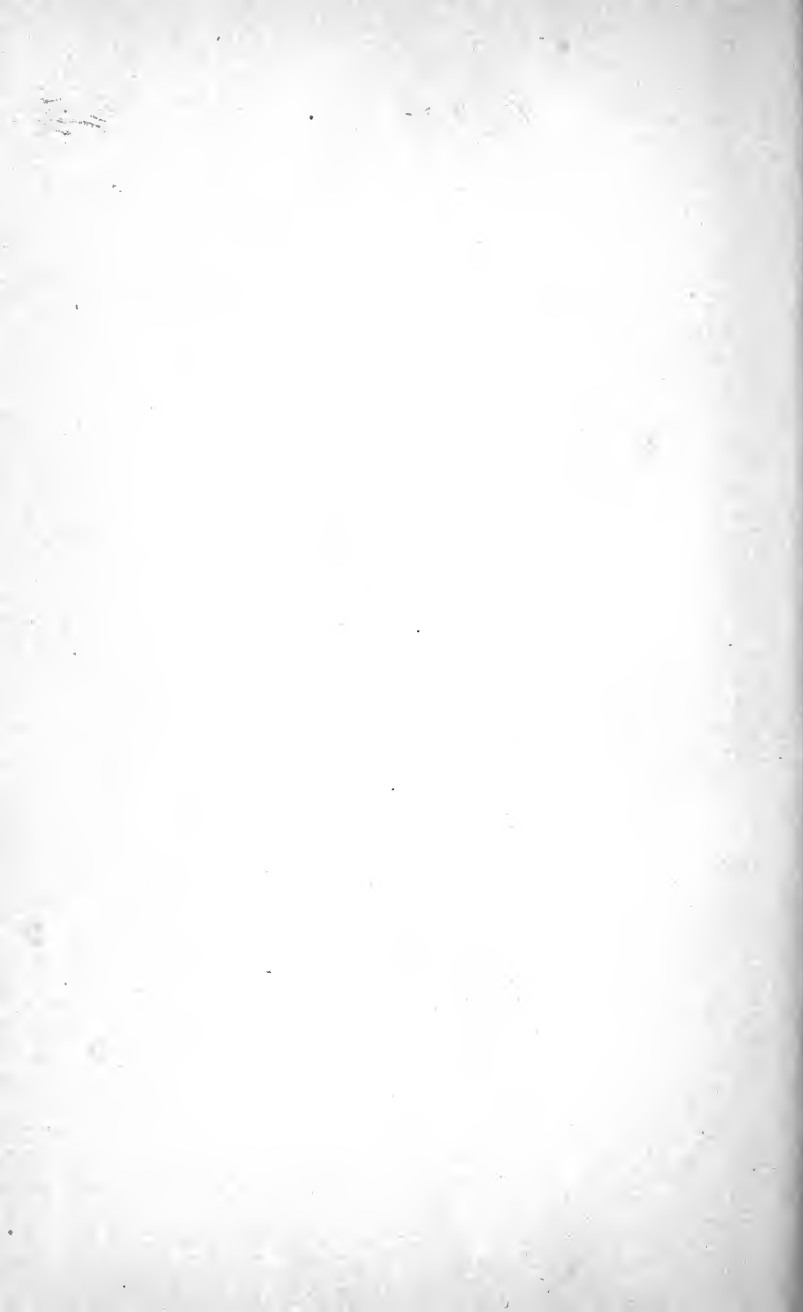
X

THE swift sea-wind is in our faces sweet.
Earth yearning draweth at our feet ; unloath
That from the upland rock-heap, down and down,
Haste to the neighbor-haven, taking ship
To try with the nether sphere the sweep and surge
Onward, along of ocean's openness —
Toward bourn in the fane domestic and the place
Of the waxing spirit infantile-divine :
The waxing spirit new-discover'd in us
By declaration of the wilderness,
By dedication of the elder earth
To mutual intropermeance benign.

RELIGION IN NATURE

XI

BELOVÈD, and may I therefore still respond,
Though indolently aging, to the lift
And throb of sunbeam and of ocean-spume,
The orb of heaven and myriad-mated proof
Of heart's high health of the monad-wilderness
Its immanence of mutuality,
Its beauty by power of the private worth
Of each least straggling weed, each air-wing'd voice
Breathed and besoul'd by inference of an whole.
Love ! not an Whole beyond the reach of each !
Love ! no All-Love ! — But this sweet heart-in-heart,
Religion of our nature as we live !



WORK AND DEATH



WORK AND DEATH

I

DEAR heart, our hearts have shared alike the woe
Of watching by the side of him we love
The hours and hours, the nights and days, away
While fever and pain upon the pitiful frame
Have wrought well-nigh their worst — the hour of death
Seeming at any hour from him not far.
And therefore close to our own piteousness
The death-spirit hover'd. And our hearts of love
Were silent, heavy. But the sufferer's smile
With life returns; rejoicing hourly more
The wearied eyes of watching. That our hearts
Are lifted and our sighs transform'd to song.

LOVE POEMS

II

FOR, with the hope of health in him we love,
Hath come to us, not stimulance alone
In life's anticipation but, therewith
The happiness of helpfulness, the sense
Of stress and woe rewarded in the stint
Of daily, momentarily assisting toward
His comfort and establishment in strength. —
It were not that mere natural descent,
Continuance of our race which seem'd estopp'd,
Were rescued. For the cumulance of life
Lies less in generation than in labor
To foster, to make flourish, whom we love.

WORK AND DEATH

III

AND only when the fostering, estopp'd,
Turns to decay is heart's dismay upon us ;
The help perverted, scarce the lineage lost,
Destroying faith's foundations. Yet the beloved,
Being loved for sonship, life-inheritance,
Is doubly loved ; blood-nature too inciting
That aid which mainly springs more spiritual. —
And to help-effort, happily at heart,
Our dawns are dedicated. Though within
Are adumbrations of a deeper joy
In sorrow shrouded ; of a grief or joy
(I know not) founded in the fear o'erpast.

LOVE POEMS

IV

FOR such our normal nurture that, if life
Along a wonted level of fair days
Allow our avocations without let;
And strength be equal; then the helpfulness
Of hourly intercourse with all around
(And specially with sonship, as by nature !)
Seems spirit-perquisite, a privilege
Not readily nor yet expectedly
In danger of a forced relinquishment.
And from such surety breedeth in our hearts
An artifact of arrogant self-trust,
Conceit of spiritual sufficiency.

WORK AND DEATH

V

NOT that the normal outlook may not find
From day to day the usual rebuff
Of half-frustration, testimonial shrewd
Of derogation from the standard set
For fair achievement ! Yet some modicum
Of alteration of the face of things
Toward betterment unto a shaping whim
Or guiding principle of arrogance
May show unto the setting of the sun.
And, with the rising next, ariseth in us
Fresh expectation of accomplishment
According to the measure of a man.

LOVE POEMS

VI

BUT, face to face with death, what providence
Of personal provision can avail? —
The fate, maybe, averts itself. Or some
Peculiar care duly evades for once
The momentary menace — and insofar
Is miracle accomplish'd, conquering
The terrible dismay confronting us.
And he we love smileth the more secure!
But still the fact of fate, the sight of self
In premonition powerless, abides
Shaking the quicksands of our self-conceit,
Shuddering the courage of our ignorance.

WORK AND DEATH

VII

THOUGH hereupon some comfort. We are come
Not strangers to the world, not otherwise form'd
Of alien order unto which our proof
Of life-in-death were all-inimical!
But, so earth-domiciled, our hearts are home:
Involved, evolved of truth-experiment,
The creatures of self-circumstance innate;
Are come, in courage or in cowardice
(Still equally in either sort), entail'd
Of the nature-fluxion of a death-in-life,
Axiom and explanation in ourselves
Of the very confrontation now abhorr'd.

LOVE POEMS

VIII

I MEAN not merely that the onward move
Of earth, the cyclic iterance, hath need
Of death and death-succession, to make place
For fresh performance all-improvingly :
And, so, that death had come to dwell with us.
For such surplenitude, such plethora
Of instances, requiring sacrifice,
Were the very crux. — But that the spirit we are,
Aware of death, by that awareness takes
Truth best upon herself, earning her state
In sequence sacrificial : life proved love,
In passion of the death-envisagement.

WORK AND DEATH

IX

AND thereby doth achievement within death
Survive and flourish, every circumstance
Of spirit germane unto the paradox,
Not as inimical to health of soul
But, as preconstitution of the heart
Wherethrough alone can real accomplishment
Obtain. Nor need there now be balance drawn
Between the sum of such accomplishment
And mortal inefficiency. For, lo!
Yon passion in the embers of our pride,
Aglow but in the breath of chastening:
Which age-long by the death-wings hath been fann'd.

LOVE POEMS

X

DEAR heart, death's absolute overmastery
Foreproven in our natural helplessness
Beneath the fear and rumor of his fame
So hovering close upon the soul we love ;
And yet outbraved within the militance
Of death-appreciation while we toil ;
Precludes the more-and-less of estimate.
Our life's accomplishment can still contain
The very blotting-out (though only guess'd
And momentarily forepast), avow the fear
Destructive of creation ; and still live
Evaluative though annihilate.

WORK AND DEATH

XI

AND thus the nobler grief, the joy austere
Alike, the outlook and acceptance whole
Of will self-sacrificial ! For see, how life —
Already seeming deep and rich enow
With hope and failure, in the peril felt
For love's sake (and the perilment of love
O'erpast) — hath deepliest, richliest qualified
Experience of the spirit, so learning most
The meed of parentage to be maintain'd.
The life-efficiency, by death therethrough
Avow'd and death's all-cancellation felt,
Itself were absolute, incalculable —

LOVE POEMS

XII

AND, so, world-fostering, a power, a pulse
Of spirit-inspiration, an ideal
Creative ; through the ages mundanely,
Of love even and the joy of helpfulness :
This son we love and fear'd-for teaching us
The way of labor everlastingly. —
Lift we the living burden, aye expecting
Unto our labor death's quietus yet.
Love we the fear ; and, with the courage born
Of fear accepted, watch beside the world
The heart-achievement immanent, the wisdom
Of confidence : in failure beautiful.

SONGS OF THE GENERATIONS



SONGS OF THE GENERATIONS

I

AH, love ! when I consider in mine house
The young child and conceive how we are come
To dignity of eldness, at a step
The port and stature as of ancestors
(And desuetude ancestral so entail'd !);
Whilst he, the novel generation, groweth
Dearly usurping all the livelier grace
Of hope : the waxing, not the waning, life ;
Then in the pause of vision'd parentage
Back hark I to that earlier state foregone
Of mine own childhood, mine envisagement
Of father and of mother lost erewhile.

LOVE POEMS

II

THE feel of abdication from the seat
Of power in yielding place, if wilfully,
To heart's belovèd heir hath brought therewith
Retirement from any real turmoil
Of over-effort toward accomplishment
In mine own person, brought acceptance of
The substitution, the fresh vicarage :
Explaining to my soul the paradox
Of self-postponement, living-o'er-again,
Which even mine adolescence, youth-purblind,
Perceived for marvel of my parents' spirit
In daily rendering up their seat of self.

SONGS OF THE GENERATIONS

III

I PLEDGE me, never to their latest hour
Did they retire from ripe accomplishment
Or soul-responsibility within
Their part and purport to the world at large :
For they were noble of their souls' degree !
But yearly, hourly (doubtless) did they learn
Increasingly a power of prophecy,
Of — come-what-would — achieving ere their death
Man's preparation for the child-god's way —
That untoward and usurping force still fed
Of the very lives the which its youth outwore
And drove to desuetude : as now mine own.

LOVE POEMS

IV

YET now I feel whereby the force I was
Of new assertion and displacingness
Brake not the hearts of them whose eldness seem'd,
At first, but natural effacement from
The genuine stir and meeting-place of life.
Now feel I why within me reverence
Responded, with a filial grace uprear'd,
Unto the infinite service of their care.
Now feel I how the heart parental takes
The stings of child-encroachment gratefully
And by the gratitude evokes perchance
A piety — though in the breast of youth.

SONGS OF THE GENERATIONS

V

AND subtly sweet the compensation here
Provided for the half-forced effacement from
The front of life : this bosom'd warmth within me
Of intimate onlook, life anew allow'd
Vicarious, prophetic ; yet, more sweet
Subtlier still the assurance to my soul,
Soothing a conscience' quarter-century
Of self-reproach, this self-discovery late
Of compensation operative aye
Within the father's and the mother's bosom
Destroying, as I sense it here, all pain
Of their displacement by the child I was !

LOVE POEMS

VI

FOR, reverence or stark irreverence
Alike, stood their largess of gratitude
In main return'd but by the youth in me
Appropriating hourly from their hand
The fountain'd bounty half-inexplicable,
And turning but to purpose of its own
The lavish'd, high resource lent of their love.
Though now the knowledge of like love within,
Allowing, longing for the sacrifice
To the waxing future-manhood, cleans the score,
Wipes out the stain of being born that heir
Doom'd to displace their souls' nobility.

SONGS OF THE GENERATIONS

VII

THE reminiscence, then, were therefore robb'd
Forever of the childhood's fancied shame ;
The spirit and sweetness of my child in me
Vouchsafing revelation (if remote,
Yet speaking as with sure authority)
Of that fulfilment which my foil of child
Afforded — be it childlike ne'er so crude
Assumptive — to the eld potential in them,
The eld inevitable : saved of sting
Itself by that same fact of parenthood
And inference of sonship. — To be son !
Oh, sweet, then, shall the recollection stand !

LOVE POEMS

VIII

AND still how fortunate was reverence,
Which fortune of my spirit made respond
The longtime-since-incomprehensible
Bounty of father and of mother toward me !
What satisfaction to the memory
That deep unto their deeps did daily call —
Despite earth's mystery scarce-understood
Of generate usurpation ! For in me
Was born the generation's best response ;
To memory hitherto a partial salve —
If soothing insufficiently for peace.
And part of peace is now that reverence.

SONGS OF THE GENERATIONS

IX

AH, therefore, love ! pray we the future hours —
Not for the sake of solace to our own
By soft complacence of a pride in him
And perfected approval, but — that he
Make reverent return increasingwise
In mutuality unto our care,
Lapping in love our house, as formerly
Each house of adolescence of ourselves.
That, when the fond self-accusation comes
For usurpation and displacingness,
Be he by memory some least assuaged
Long ere the final revelation heal.

LOVE POEMS

X

LONG ere belated revelation yield him
Solace by knowledge how his growth hath been
Our growth vicarious, lifting from us
The burden of the onrush of the world
Whilst none less leaving in us the wise heart
Of outlook temporal still self-resign'd
Interpreting through him this changing face
Untoward of eldness in eternity ! —
To him wish we a soul replete as now
Mine own and thine, belovèd, of wisdom earn'd
Anent the generations, lighting us
By lamphood : erst received, now 'pass'd adown' !

POEMS OF A PRAGMATISM

POEMS OF A PRAGMATISM

I

DEAR love, it needed not the loyalty
Of earth's ensuant cycles to attest
Our love's success, our year-without-end truth
Of mutual possession. Sun and stars
With risings and with settings may obey
Their seasonable promptings whatsoe'er
And we move with them, if from love to love,
Evolving still with love's maturity —
And all be increase as the years behind
Are cumulant within the years to-be.
And in such kind is love's success assured. —
Though of high proof no whit was wanting to us.

LOVE POEMS

II

FOR something is there of right prophecy
In spiritual containment : in a love
Like ours of comprehension, all-forestall'd
What fate soever which the seasons bring —
Itself, such comprehension, overtly
Creative, in its self-conditioning,
Of all experiment or proof thereof.
And every instance of the working-well,
Each after-moment cosmic-orderly
And earth-comporting, hath a working-worth
But ever as fresh-defining intimately
Our souls' compelling insight functional.

POEMS OF A PRAGMATISM

III

'T WERE deep ingratitude yet to deny
Our boon of confirmation, cosmicwise
Achieved, dear day-by-day, sweet night-by-night,
With universal acquiescence in
The union and belonging of our lives.
Life oft hath parted love : each heart its way
Without appeal from love misunderstood ;
And vindication ever been postponed
Though very death demanded reckoning —
For these things be about us in the earth
Of others' hearts incomprehensibly. —
Or very death perchance had parted us.

LOVE POEMS

IV

BUT death, that no man spareth, though with us
A visitant indeed, in such sort smote
As welded with the warm-ensanguined wound
Our souls but firmlier in the healing scar —
One infancy so softly snatch'd away
In peace as scarce from pre-nativity
To waken to the sleep of after-death.
And, for that gentle sojourner, the days
(Despite regret for loss, with hope fulfill'd)
Offer in generous vitality
The waxing wonder of the childhood, now
Oft-sung with celebration worshipping.

POEMS OF A PRAGMATISM

V

AND, though the potency of such a birth
And of such gradual growth of life with song
Lay doubtless in our love then at the first,
Yet death to birth (as with the earlier-born)
Had like enough, for all the prayers of love,
Inexorably ensued: ah, save the years
Of earth themselves had kindlier decreed !
Wherefore is votive anthem not inept
Devoutly in respect of him whom love
Might preconceive indeed but, save all earth
Conspired in acquiescence, could not bring
To year-by-year perfection presently.

LOVE POEMS

VI

AND, whilst I chant, he chanteth ; to thine ear
Blending with speech of mine an own love-speech,
Blithe-fill'd of thee as any verse though writ
In the mystic incitation rapturously
Of thee within me — as I alway sing.
And, whilst he dwelleth with us in the world,
Shall utterance, then, not fail in fair approof
Of love's fulfilment through the passing years. —
So death, so birth have kindly visited
Our love's œconomy and left with us
Alike, in keeping to our Lord's command,
The dues of faithful stewardship fivefold.

POEMS OF A PRAGMATISM

VII

AND where fivefold hath been the earth's return
In rhythmus cosmic of the involving spheres
Which, processful and alway urging on,
Are yet to primal sight encyclical
And so for figure serve us of our days
In measure of a man — where years have been
In sequence thus sufficient that we pause
For retrospect and somewhat absolute
Of satisfaction in their estimate —
'T were meet that song for hail and for farewell
Mark the sweet stade upon the journeying.
For we joint voyage took, and kept in faith.

LOVE POEMS

VIII

I TOOK thee in the spring ; and now the spring
A fifth recurrence offereth, buds and birds
Our service ceremonial solemnizing
With flowery descant raptured, then as now.
These delicate hymnodizings in the green
And gossamer breath of blossomy mists about
Semble the heart-remember'd morn when we
From our new home in love-light issuing
(Thrill'd in the sunshine and the mystery
Of mutual life-envisagement) stood rapt
With wonder of the earth's enfolding joy :
Hand-in-hand gazing from our doorway forth.

POEMS OF A PRAGMATISM

IX

WHAT marvel lay behind us ! How the world
Which long in separate spheres environ'd us
Had irresistibly establish'd now
The intimate conjugation orb in orb !
And, fusing both to one concentrate whole,
Had permeated through-and-through with candor
Of radiance autovital soul and earth :
Hearts, ay, and all that heart may see or hear
Made mutual-possessing and possess'd —
World yet withdrawn apart, that married truths
Of married confidences might be free
In selfhood focuss'd of our common home !

LOVE POEMS

X

WHAT marvel lay before : one step beyond
Our portal shimmering the faëry-world
Wherein an earth's futurity was ours ;
The home behind, where ever to return
In privileged, all-inclusive solitude
From soul's excursions ; and before our feet
Earth's infinite association, then
As now itself with seasonable loves
And home-tide glad-resurgent ! I have sung
Erstwhile the wisdoms of the winter-world
And fire-bright hearthstone of the home-return.
Sobeit. But now there is with thee the spring !

POEMS OF A PRAGMATISM

XI

REMEMBER'D is the border of the wood
Where rippling-windy fields of herb uplift,
In myriad quivering choristries, to hold
With intricate chaplets garlanded the bride
And wingèd bridegroom fine-melodious near ! —
A tiniest glint, bright-tonal, 'mid the leaves,
Scarce-perch'd, but momentarily from bough to bough
With vividest animations fluttering up :
A tropic-keen intensity of hue
Like quick blood mounting into vernalness !
And thou and I knew how the tree contain'd
Love's concentrations, of a world ensphered.

LOVE POEMS

XII

I MIND the song, a swift ebullience brief
Of overjoying energy : too brief
And leaving on the ear a tune undone
Maybe, but oft-repeated and so sure
Of the rightness of the woodland and the world —
So lets the world but love alone, to sing !
I mind the song, familiar-sweet to each
In our long-separate springtimes ; ah ! so dear
Even then, for that therein our lives most lack'd.
And how the recognition on allured us
Till nigh forgot we, love must nest alone —
And, suddenly too near, had silenced him !

POEMS OF A PRAGMATISM

XIII

SO we of the world of the songster agitant
(Soft-smiling and with kindness at the core
For fellowship) abjured the curious quest
And left to a bosky hermitage the small
Too-wary homekeepers ; and, faring on,
Along the blithe, bee-haunted wilderness
Of faint scents hymeneal, warmly glanced,
Perchance, each unto each and frankly there
Press'd hand or lips beneath the guardian heaven ;
Upgazing after, where the open porch
Far on the sun-steep'd hill invited aye
Nestward our footsteps from all wanderings.

LOVE POEMS

XIV

LOVE, it was all so fair ! And yet I find
This fifth return of spring-tide quite as true
To pulses of the heart and confidences
Whose dear familiarity of faith
But makes them dearer. For with every throb
Of the rhythmus of our days hath been put-by
Still more and more of meanings unforgot
And not-to-be-forgotten : whilst we live
A cumulation in experience
Of what life close-together, soul-in-soul
Brings in the practice of it — warmer still
Outwearing spring-tide's half-timidity.

POEMS OF A PRAGMATISM

XV

AY, gloried as the May-tide earth may glow
With conjugal fervor or the hearts of us
With fire canescent, yet that shrinking from
The world-suffusion surely may be mark'd
Alike in the keen nest-keepers of the vale
Or us of the bridal homestead. If our hill
Lifts us above the vale as no bush-nest
Allows of the heart-love's immanency, yet
The fond seclusion of the first love-days
Limits love-comprehension, sets the soul
Someway sequester'd from her lordliest truth
Of utterance in a world-accomplishment.

LOVE POEMS

XVI

'T WERE true, I ween, no vital immanency
Of each in each could be establish'd, save
The privacy of spring permitted love
The nest, the bird-and-blossom-privilege
Of soul-retirement, the thee-with-me.
For otherwise were nought of nucleus fused
For focus of the radiance nebulous
In the new-achieving cosmos. Universe
Requires the sequestration at the first. —
But, now that spring-tide hath a fifth return,
Shall summery-universal openness
Of spirit-interplay be praised aloud.

POEMS OF A PRAGMATISM

XVII

FOR, praising so from open sanctuary
Of after-proven hymeneal faith
In comprehensive power, fecundity
And foison of our fellowship, shall song
Resound with a rural symphony, the voice
Untamed if self-controll'd and rightly so
Rhyming more rich the ardent harmonies
Of the soul-tide of achievement : earth and sky
Alike solstitial and so poised and held
In understanding of the cadences,
The full-tongued faith-conclusions — world and we
In conjugate antiphon ; we now as one.

LOVE POEMS

XVIII

YEA, in the dual constitution of
Our lives and their new ripening (once the spring
Hath been and nest-time and the privacy
Of love's œconomy), provideth love
The password to the heart and soul of all,
In absolute intuition sympathizing
Of the thee-in-me not otherwise attain'd.
Earth may o'er-teem, that sun above pours down
His actinism and beneficence ;
And, though the bird in faith-fatigue cease song
For burden of the generations' due —
Shall we not welcome such futurity ?

POEMS OF A PRAGMATISM

XIX

FOR I would scarce allow the song of the bird
(Meant only for the mating and o'erdone
With cares of the nestling), howsoe'er bird-whole
Of nest-truth and leaf-inference, for best
Of utterance human ; but avow the call,
Beyond mere wood-note wild, to rhapsody
In conscience cultured of an assonance
Wrought of the spirit-labor of the sound
Of multiple voices of the more-than-men
Who one by one have led, shall lead, or thee
Or me or any to the harvest of
The philosophic arduous prophecy.

LOVE POEMS

XX

A GLORY beyond the rapture of the hour
Of mating thus abides, though even we
Approach that harvesting post-aestival.
And now 't is so the summer of our lives
Though spring reneweth about us : for we see
With wider eyes than erst the functioning
Of spring-tide in the world-time harmonies.
The joy quinquennial best courseth through
Our ripening sap-cells, sith fecundity
Be also ours and foretaste of the whole
Complex of cosmic conscience in the fruit
Of progeny, earth's gradual vicarage.

POEMS OF A PRAGMATISM

XXI

PREPARE we, love, for autumn whilst our gaze
Feasts as in June-enjoyment and our song
Includeth earth in love's antiphony !
The full quinquenniad hath found us true
Thusfar to propaedeutic, leading on
With glad-avow'd responsibility
The self-succession in the young man-child.
And so is wisdom as of winter felt
In every utterance dedicate to him ;
And philosophic arduous prophecy,
Beyond love-rapturous privity, in each
Earth-explanation offer'd to his soul.

III

LOVE POEMS

XXII

BELOVÈD, so lead we him along the wood
Now flooded with the season ; teaching him
A commune with all creatures, bird-and-bough
Companionships primordial : revelling
Both in the May without and in our June
Warm-felt within us ; that, when autumn is
Upon us with a seed-time, decades may
Leave him unlonely, heart-at-home with earth
And ready to receive love's benison,
If scarce from the guidance outgrown yet, by dower
Of some true woman-mating — (like thine own)
Some spirit to yield an universe to him.

POEMS OF A PRAGMATISM

XXIII

AND thus may we our part of more-than-men
Achieve in this our love-time, handing down
An influence of comprehension, proving
By permeation in experience
The absoluteness of the spring-tide days.
Love needed not the ensuant loyalty,
'T is true ; nor sun and stars the promptings of
The rhythmus cosmic. Yet, as man is man
So fill'd of 'fore and after, must we pause
One hour in reason'd gratitude for terms
Fivefold of attestation : heart in heart,
For cosmic acquiescence, world-assured.

LOVE POEMS

XXIV

A SONG half-lingers in the woodland — whilst
Our own, mayhap, be just with June begun !
Who knoweth ? There is an art-maturing with
The journeying of the milestones — and a wealth
Of forest-ecstasy in forest-death
So as by fire of an Augusthood :
As by renunciation, largelier felt
The multitudinous world-ordering.
And thou and I, 'soever merged in him
The man-child, should forevermore be free
Of the sweet soul-country, faring forth in joy
From the open porch sun-steep'd, high on the hill.

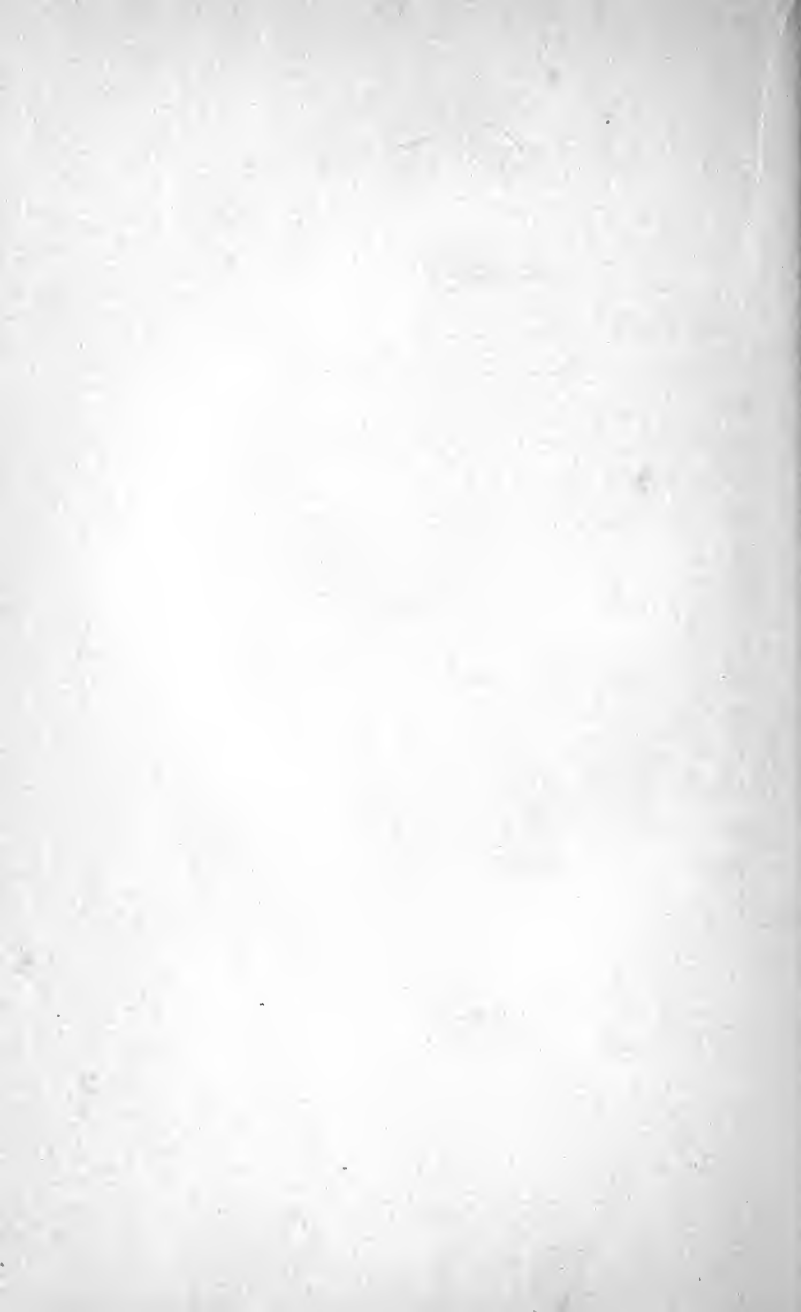
POEMS OF A PRAGMATISM

XXV

HAIL and farewell, our May-time ! We are bride
And bridegroom fain, if fondly more-than-man
In love's world-comprehension : birth and death
Still visitants maybe ; and these our days
Delightful but by fair conspiracy
With earth now loveliest to a wandering.
We are pass'd on to prescience aestival
Of eldness. But our stewardship hath been
Fivefold of spring-tide ; and a faith in us
Abideth spring-like through the moods that move.
Hail and farewell ! We thank the years that yield
Such proof, of reminiscence inmostly.



SONNETS DOMESTIC



SONNETS DOMESTIC

EPHEMERIS

I KNOW not, love, if thou in death shouldst lie
And speech no more upon thine ear might fall,
How any song to thy memorial
Might issue from my lips in threnody !
Without thy heart to hearken, how might I
Weave thee one wreath of music coronal —
When nothing of the sorrowing at all,
'Soever soul-felt, could evoke thy sigh ?

Ah, love ! and therefore, whilst thine ears may hear
And heart unto the music harmonize,
Thus morn by morn with service not too late
I laud thee : that the hour of any fate
May find some rite accomplish'd, worshipwise
Some offering accepted and call'd dear.

LOVE POEMS

TO JANE IN BEREAVEMENT AND EXPECTATION

I

O SAD Madonna, waiting still the child ;
O arms, yet empty of the Savior-form !
O mother-heart, so wanting to be warm,
Though wintrily from harvest-home exiled !
O onwardness of life, by death beguiled
To backward yearnings which no hopes becharm !
O wistfulness, prevented to enarm
Thy sacrifice in service reconciled !

Thy sacrifices of a ministry
All soul-devotion and self-offering !
Thy longings toward a birth inveterate
Of endless abnegation ! — Shall these be
Bemock'd ? Thy motherhood, an empty thing ?
Shall Christ unto His world not come so late ?

SONNETS DOMESTIC

TO JANE IN BEREAVEMENT AND EXPECTATION

II

HE first announced divinity to men,
'Tis true. And seem'd the birth a miracle.
Through Him indeed the mystery befell
Of motherhood unto a woman, then
First ware of heart's infinitude. And when
He from the life departed, seem'd it well
A promise, in the loss-impossible,
Of soul-return unto our yearning ken.

And unto thee the hope-deferr'd were sore,
Who look'st in vain unto a vanish'd God ;
Nor seek'st within thy sacrament of home
Christ's seed of self-salvation. But before
Thee ever lieth the way : where Love hath trod,
Assurance of earth's humanhood to-come.

LOVE POEMS

TO JANE IN BEREAVEMENT AND EXPECTATION

III

'T IS long ago that Christ was born and died.
Nor shall He live again, for any faith ;
Not He again be man, though perisheth
The heart His early advent deified.
Not Christ the first-born ever shall provide
Transcendence spiritual over death
Unto thy loneliness : unless love's wraith
Suffice in sorrow to the mystic Bride.

But to thy purification beyond pain
And year-o'er-ripening of autumn-grief
Accept annunciation, as earth's true
Hope and thy season's quickening again
Bring nature's own religion ! — Dear, but brief
Be world's probation to the birth anew !

SONNETS DOMESTIC

TO ONE BORN LAST NIGHT

THIS morning first, the birds sing unto thee ;
Who many mornings unto thee may sing.
This morning first, to their high carolling
Thine ears are open'd of all times to-be.
Thee, first to-day, the all-seeing sun doth see ;
Whilst wondering warmth for this thy nurturing
He poureth with his light on every thing.
For yester-morn thou wast not unto me.

Yet now to-day within my heart of song
Thou liest in the woof of a warm love :
A joy so new, so tender that it seems
Born as with beauty of the morning-beams
But now, and of such delicate wonders wove
As only to high matin-hymn belong.

LOVE POEMS

ON A HUMAN GENESIS

BORN of eternal broodings thou art come,
Life fresh-created from the void of things —
By fiat of unfathom'd offerings
Fashion'd and firmamental — to thy home ;
By offerings and sacrifice, of doom
Cosmic, to universal questionings
The answer sacramental : Whoso brings
Love to the void shall form thee from the gloom.

And from the gloom sith love hath framed thee erst,
So ever — as with light of parenthood
At stream athwart the elemental flood —
Shall love enshrine thee in its might immersed.
(And the evening and the morning were the first
Day. And the father's sight hath found thee good.)

SONNETS DOMESTIC

ANTIPHONAL

I HEAR within my house the mother-rune,
Soothing some hour of infant sleeplessness :
A mystic monotone of tenderness
By symphony untroubled ; yet in tune
With sympathy so gracious, the sweet croon
(For all its unanthemic artlessness)
Seems a supernal hymn of happiness
For gratitude at her dear baby-boon.

And this soft sound is heard within my walls
Long unmelodious for our lost child —
Heard ever with unceasing marvel mild
That this supreme to her and me befalls,
'Suaging in us all loneliness of heart.
And in the simple song my soul hath part.

LOVE POEMS

TO MY BABE IN SUMMER

I

I WEAVE around thy cradle many flowers
In garden-guerdon of an hundred hues,
Culling from field and hedge-row rainbow-showers
Of sweetness for thine infancy to choose.
Fairness I fetch thee, that thy latent powers
Of faith at sight may seize, nowise to lose
From plastic deeps, earth's beauty that embowers
Eye both and brain — absorb, nor e'er refuse
(For winter-destitution in the night
Of harden'd manhood), this that in the soul
Springs as a dawn-inalienable right
Of wonder and of joy to make thee whole
By friendliness with earth. — Thee flowers I bring
To teach thy tongue, or e'er it speak, to sing.

SONNETS DOMESTIC

TO MY BABE IN SUMMER

II

AND songful how much more thy sympathizing
Shall be, when not these blossoms garlanded
Unto thine infantile idealizing
Must die in heaps about thy bodeful bed !
How loveliest then thy voice of poetizing
When never these poor petals witherèd
(Our wanton coronal their woe disguising)
To stimulate sight-appetite are fed —
Sad victims of the Moloch of the mind ! —
Into the maw of man's intelligence.
Ah ! rather may the feel of kith and kind
Inform thee, through whatever aiding sense,
Of beauty spiritual: that thy song,
O Poet, do the living earth no wrong !

LOVE POEMS

TO MY BABE IN SUMMER

III

FOR never need the truth-compelling spirit
Destroy with interfering artifice
Of hand impertinent to pluck and wear it
The crown of life's environmental bliss.
To feel best beauty (ay, to see and hear it,
To taste the sweetness of earth's common kiss) ;
To sense of the world the wonders which endear it ;
And prosper both thy soul and them in this
Mutual bourgeoning : 't is, not to warp
Each natural purpose to some fanciful
Mood-symbolizing — but, to tune thy harp
With high interpreting heart-plausible.
For then thy garden, in the art of love,
Flowers forever with fresh guerdon-trove.

SONNETS DOMESTIC

SON OF MAN

THE story of the savior-child is true. —

'T is the first Christmas. The low cottage-eaves
Are heavy-laden ; whilst, with weary leaves,
Labor 'neath winter's weight the fir-boughs too.
And living-kind, or beast or bird, are few
Abroad in the hard weather ; for each heart cleaves
To shelter, where fox-cub suck'd 'mid summer sheaves
Haply, or — long-whiles erst — the nestling flew.

The savior-story so is credible. —

Though thou, far sky-divinity, art dimm'd ;
And pagan blindness miss thee from the Goal ;
Bides yet earth's love-lair : where, enshelter'd well
(For me, as not for beast or bird), sweet-limb'd
The Child, peace-giving presence of thy soul.

LOVE POEMS

SOMNIUM

DEAR heart, I only dream'd it : thou, hate-rife,
Estranged and unresponding ; I, distraught !
Dear heart, I only dream'd it, but was brought
Thereby to misery — a ruin'd life !
And now, awakening, from such dream-strife
Am wondrously deliver'd : every thought
Enfranchised from the bitterness sleep-wrought ;
Free of thy spirit-saviorship, sweet wife !

Dear heart, but I have suffer'd, if in dream,
The poison'd fangs of soul and felt how hell
Can crawl the floor of heaven to strike and bite —
For me, a fantasy of ghoulisn night ;
For thee, a Sonnet : just a way to tell
The absoluteness of our love supreme.

SONNETS DOMESTIC

PRIMAVERA

AND (hark !) unto the harmonies of earth
Is tuned a new-delighted, delicate joy :
Such gossamer glee as veriest birds employ,
Upripling, with unmeditated birth
And innocence immaculate of mirth,
To melody of life without alloy.
For thou, not yet who lispest, poet boy !
Babblest a nature lyre of infant worth !

Within thine April soul the pulse of speech
In merriest heart-articulance awakes
To wildwood-quickenning overflow : such laughter
As Spring outpours upon the tongue of each
Breeze-breath and sap-thrill ; such bud-truth as takes
Interpretation of the blossoming after.

LOVE POEMS

TELEPATHEIA

I

LO ! I am ill : and thou not here to hold me
From harm in the night-watches, nor to take
The loneliness from long-drawn hours awake
For want of thy sweet pity to enfold me. —
How would I weep, to hear thy love retold me
As on that night when first thy lips did make
Confession of their faith in me : to slake
The thirst of mine, wherewith thy soul ensoul'd me !

'T is our betrothal season come around
With anniversary yearnings seasonable ;
A night of pity and an hour of needing,
When memories tormentingly abound
And love itself is loneliness at pleading.
And soul is sick : and thirst, inexorable.

SONNETS DOMESTIC

TELEPATHEIA

II

LO ! I am ill : and thou once more beside me
With minist'ring sweet purpose and an heart
Blithe only to anticipate the smart
Of wifely sympathy whate'er betide me.
And bitterly no more in brain deride me
Betrothal memories. The tears that start
Are simple gratitude for that thou art —
Angel of consolation ne'er denied me.

So our wan anniversary watch is blent
Of mystical suffusion ; a vigil-season
Too vivid as of sap-insurgent meaning
To estimate past hours lonelier spent :
An instant reminiscence, ripely gleaned
Love's long-reap'd instincts to a warm unreason.

LOVE POEMS

TO JANE: WITH A WEDDING-CAKE AND CANDLES

IT matters not what anniversary,
How few the years of bridal we have seen ;
How late-enflower'd a plenitude hath been
Of spirit-pair'd communion. Thou and I —
So long or short a joy we may put by —
Are rich beyond computing, with the green,
Ungarner'd hours of affluence between
The budding and the fruitage finally.

And therefore are these weeks of blossoming,
These warm communions of sun-married Spring
And interchange of leafy sympathies
With raptures of the birds' sweet syllabling,
Rightly our feast-days : hours when heart and eyes
Alike are conscious of infinities.

SONNETS DOMESTIC

TO MY BOY, UPON HIS BIRTHDAY

I

ONE season-cycle of the sun hath sown,
Since first he beam'd upon thee, but the seed
Of health and infant wholesomeness; the weed
Or canker, broadcast of the breezes blown,
Being strewn far from thee: that thy frame hath grown
In sweetness as in strength; and all our heed
For parent-pride in gardenhood hath meed
Ample in bedded leafage bravely shown.

So primal, yet so perfected a year! —
Ah! would but earth perennially conspire
To keep thee, heart and soul, encloister'd still,
Hedged-in from every spirit-wind of ill:
A lovely life to life's primordial fire
Greenly resurgent sans reproach or fear!

LOVE POEMS

TO MY BOY, UPON HIS BIRTHDAY

II

NAY, child ! can any soul, sequester'd round
(Sans proofs of storm-wind and the tests of ill :
Batten'd as with sweet waters to the fill)
From weed and worm in covenanted ground,
By proud, superfluous petals spirit-bound —
Then of the summer's warmth abandon'd ! — still
Lift free to fruit against the fall, and will
Love's reawakening though in burial found ?

A year so perfect, yet so primitive ! —
Lo ! may but earth yield thee the worth of life
For overcoming of the wrath of it :
The struggle as the sympathy, the fit
Survival of the generous in strife ;
The ripe self-conquest of who braveliest live !

SONNETS DOMESTIC

TO JANE, HER MAGIC

I FEAR, dear friend, how all the poethood
Of dawn, the half-light fantasy that sings
(Youth's aspiration in the airy wings)
Are long since from mine elemental mood
Vanish'd ; the wakening hill, the hearkening wood,
The whispering wind of morn-imaginings,
Unto the sanity that noontide brings
Too strictly known, too little in the blood.

And, yet, to take of thee thy light-of-heart
Were, every hour more sure, to understand
The poetry of earth, the throb and lift
Of sympathy, in everything thy gift :
To waft with thee the liberating wand
Of woman-truth instinct with faëry art.

LOVE POEMS

TO ONE LEARNING TO TALK

I

ALREADY thine infant tongue attempts to tell
The secrets of the centuries, to be
Interpreter of hourly mystery
And prophet of the faith ineffable :
Thine inarticulance a miracle
Of absolute meaning ; if, at best, to me
A babbling, at the baby heart of thee
An utterance universal, languaged well.

Dear child, I know the impulse infinite
Of speech, the feel of utterance achieved
Transmuting, world-illumining — and then
The failure of the truth among all men. —
Singer ! when thy psalm needs to be received,
May I have soul, to apprehend aright !

SONNETS DOMESTIC

TO ONE LEARNING TO TALK

II

BUT, also, be thou heedful that thy speech
Be alway tender of thy fellow's whim,
Imbued with deference for the faith of him,
Preventing bitterness: that unto each
Shall seem his own the truth thou so wouldst teach
And thy light be unto the utmost rim
Transfused and love-irradiant of the dim
Uncertain vistas to the stars that reach.

And by the service social shall thy word
Inform thy mind with symbols manifold
Unguess'd of him who sitteth still alone
To sing, and marks no heart-beat but his own. —
Attune truth-fellowship; and thou hast told
What needs not, yet deserveth, to be heard.

LOVE POEMS

TO ONE LEARNING TO TALK

III

AND thus, dear child, be but the more sincere
For each fresh insight of the world so woo'd,
Conforming speech to private poethood
(Not to the caption of the listening ear)
The richlier by thy love for them that hear.
For he, that needs not to be understood
Because all hearts reveal him to his mood,
Sings the true universal inly dear.

And therefore thy rhapsodic prophet-trance
Shall wax but wiselier lyric by the height,
The depth and breadth and strength of helping power,
The zeal of every ministering hour
Concluded of thy spirit in its might. —
Serve ; and thy soul shall not miss utterance !

SONNETS DOMESTIC

THE FIRST WORD

LO ! — whether because the lips ancestrally
That kiss'd thee in the morning of thy kind
And had the shaping of thy primal mind,
Being hopeful to propitiate, did try
To teach thee of thy father flattery
And prosper so their babe ; or if behind
The tender syllabling thy soul 's inclined
Toward immanent affection — here am I !

By a new bond beholden at thy call
I hearken a behest, and I am here.
Whilst to the wonderment of every ear
Thy late-won spell controlleth me in thrall :
The Name — as anciently supposed of some,
A Power to make the heart-beats go and come !

LOVE POEMS

THE FIRST FLIGHT

I

THE house is strangely silent : not a stir
Above, even in that adytum where nurse
Is priestess of the immemorial verse ;
No croon, no high acclaim of him nor her !
Yet, since that morning when Love's messenger
Had left him in the temple to disperse
The veriest shades of night, no hour the worse
Hath seem'd for hymns of such a torchbearer.

And now 't is silence — counted gloom by gloom
Unto the worship'd prodigal's return ;
Who, year by year but with a further flight
Forsaking still the nest, shall lightly yearn
To his own hour of mating : when the night
Shall find mine house as songless as the tomb.

SONNETS DOMESTIC

THE FIRST FLIGHT

II

BUT yet, what joy to see how he, my son,
Shall taste of freedom and the morning-earth
The sweets outside the temple, though the hearth
Of parentage be dark, the nest-hour done !
What years of youth-renewal but begun
For us who, if with a vicarious worth
Thereby the livelier, take the marvel-mirth
Of sunsurge and the fledgling-clarion !

And when the fun and flutter shall be o'er
Of dewtime, frolic heedlessness in him,
When stirrings of maturing spirit thrill
The noontide to a glory — shall eyes be dim
Behind dull panes which so still gaze their fill
Openly under heaven as of yore ?

LOVE POEMS

PROPAEDEUTIC

I

ANON, upon men's myriad walks and ways
A small, uncertain step hath enter'd : he,
My son, essaying, if but deviously,
The all-uneven surface of earth's maze.
And firm through enterprise of lordlier days
Shall largelier go and come the step to-be ;
Leading, in man-reliance, far from me
And guardianship outworn of hand and gaze.

But now, that yet each tottering effort ends
In lost precipitance, and parent-arms
Are more-than-human strong and wide and sure —
Ah ! trust that of the learning shall endure
The sense of sonship in him : from all harms
Of soul enarming, far as soul extends !

SONNETS DOMESTIC

PROPAEDEUTIC

II

AH, time was when above all walks of man
Seem'd some o'er-human guardian leaning out
Of heaven with father-arms our paths about,
Leading and leading since the world began.
And unto Him our every journey ran,
Or swift or slow, undeviant — in rout
Or confidence, yet safeliest ! But doubt
Hath left our steps to guide us as they can.

So, 'in default of any fathering God',
Must fatherhood unto our end-of-time
Sustain thee in a sonship ; and my heart
Be absolute in zeal to serve the start
Anent thy man-salvation. That thy prime
Shall trace a truth, there where thy feet have trod.

LOVE POEMS

PROPAEDEUTIC

III

FOR nothing of that Godship men have lost
Need so be wanting to us. But a lore
Of love, a mutual intimacy more
Ennobling than of angels, pay the cost
A thousandfold though all the heavenly host
Are dreams and only death hath gone before :
We in such orphanage if earning sore
The cross of Christhood, yet its victory most. —

Cast on my care thy childhood, gentlest son ;
That I of thee be worthiest in the will
To lead thee toward an understanding soul
And strength for sympathy within the whole
World, that is thine to foster to the fill !
For so eternity is best begun.

SONNETS DOMESTIC

OF RIGHT AND WRONG

I

BEHOLD ! but yesterday thy baby breed
Was free from blame ; if human, without sin :
No matter what thy hands were busied in,
An heart immaculate of moral meed,
A soul beneath least hint of ethic heed
Imputed, Edenwise a blank within.
Yet now thy tiny hands and feet begin
A mischief — mischief meant in will and deed !

Stern duty toucheth thee ; and at the nod
Thy new humanity is hard at bay,
Dogged and resolute to be not — dress'd !
And we must threat thee of a worst and best,
Beset thee with the thorns of yea and nay,
And spoil thy peace if we would spare the rod.

LOVE POEMS

OF RIGHT AND WRONG

II

PERCHANCE, thine innocence was some mistake
Of hearts case-harden'd beyond niceties
Of virtues eozoan ; and thine eyes
Have alway chosen, cradled yet awake,
A better or a worse to make or break
A moralism in thee, only wise
In ways less overt to our sympathies —
Who now at heart with anxious insight ache ?

I doubt me. — But the doom imperial
Of good and evil in the spirit borne
Confronts thee from this hour ; for thee, for us
A kindred crown of torture glorious. —
And ours, to learn thy longings and to warn
As best we may. And thine, to come at call.

SONNETS DOMESTIC

QUINQUENNIAL

BELOVÈD, when first we met, how seem'd thy face
The face of some remember'd friend, thy speech
A converse sweet-continued — though the reach
Of sight or sound before in any place
Had not for me contain'd thee, and the grace
Of years fivefold hath since sufficed to teach
But little of the years lost unto each
In ignorance of such an heart-embrace !

But, soft ! There lispeth at our hearth the truth
Of that miss'd reminiscence, o'er and o'er
Companionable to our mutual youth.
And one, who breathed and died, breathed not in vain
Of past infinitudes : betwixt us twain
A bond of joy just-born forevermore.

LOVE POEMS

ATTAINMENT

I

BELOVÈD, when the failure day by day
From any perfected accomplishment
Offends the spirit, when the discontent
Of our humanity condemns the clay
That erst had aspiration ; then I pray
To thee, with him who unto us was sent,
For absolution — and, in meekness shent,
Accept the heart-forgiveness as I may.
I know that were I nobler than the best
(More strong to serve and to achieve in thee)
Thou couldst not more accept nor more make blest ;
Thou couldst not more achieve the holiest
Of earth's perfections : thou, with him and me,
The elemental human family.

SONNETS DOMESTIC

ATTAINMENT

II

AND as some wide embrace of sea and shore
Enraptures and uplifts us outwardwise
To feel companionable with the skies
Whilst none less human humbly to the core ;
So thou, with him whom thy sweet spirit bore
To be thy bosom's solace, to mine eyes
(Though self-abased) affordest high emprise
And heartfelt inspiration more and more —
Just by the all-forbearance ! If my part
Of unattainment still be comforted
By sense of comradeship with all thou art
And firmamental kinship with thine heart,
Shall I forswear the power within me bred
To sing (and cease not) of thy splendors spread ?





DEC 21 1912



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 018 407 613 5